

Scientific and Medical
Books, and Minerals.
A. E. FOOTE, M. D.,
4116 Elm Ave.
Philadelphia, Pa.

Compliments of the Writer

Plummer (R. H.) 21

ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE OPENING

OF THE

Eighteenth Annual Meeting

OF THE

Medical Society of the State of California

BY

R. H. PLUMMER, M. D., PRESIDENT

Professor of Anatomy in Cooper Medical College, San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO
THE BANCROFT COMPANY
1888



ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE OPENING
OF THE
EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE

Medical Society of the State of California.

By R. H. PLUMMER, M. D., President.

Fellow Members: The acceptance of the honor which you conferred in calling me to the presidential office, carried with it duties and obligations which have occasioned me much anxiety. My manifold labors during the year have so occupied my time that, unlike the skillful mariner, I have scarcely been able to take observations and make my reckonings. It is therefore with some embarrassment that I attempt this morning to render an account of my stewardship; but I realize that I stand in the midst of friends who have been my co-laborers in this Society for eighteen years; and, conscious of the fact that conferring this honor and imposing the duties were the impulses of your own generous hearts, I feel assured that I may reasonably expect your indulgence in whatever measure my efforts fall short of your anticipations.

The physician, in the discharge of his professional duties, frequently displays all the valor exhibited on the field of battle, but his office is to save, not to slaughter; and his training is for the silent chamber wherein reign sorrow, suffering, death; not for the Forum. "The Genius of Medicine sits pensive and alone, her finger on her lips." As a devotee of medicine, therefore, I expect you to throw the mantle of charity over my deficiency in the art of oratory.

ANCIENT MEDICINE.

The "healing art" is as old as the human family. In the Old Testament we find Job speaking of his counselors as "physicians of no value," and Jeremiah exclaiming, "Is there

no balm in Gilead?" More than three thousand years ago Homer sang :

"A wise physician, skilled our wounds to heal,
Is more than armies to the public weal."

Observations on the clinical history treatment and pathology of diseases were recorded on tablets, in the rude methods of the times. As new truths accumulated, fraternal organizations ensued, and the *esprit de corps* which followed is amply attested by the history of the Druids of ancient Gaul, the Asclepiadæ of Greece, the numerous organizations of the "Middle Ages," and the countless associations and colleges of our own generation devoted to the healing art.

In the present time, when locomotive engineers and railroad brakemen have their "brotherhoods," and the "bakers and candlestick makers" their "unions," it is little wonder that the members of the medical profession, drawn together by its many hallowed ties, should unite in fraternal organizations.

STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY.

The progress of medicine in our own State is a subject of interest to us, and it will form a chapter in the history of our commonwealth which will claim the attention of those who come after us. The first effort at a State organization was in 1856, now thirty-two years ago, when the late Thomas M. Logan, of Sacramento, and Elias S. Cooper, of San Francisco, issued a call for a medical convention in Sacramento for the purpose of organizing a State Medical Society.

A goodly number of physicians responded to that call and organized such a Society, which adopted a constitution, by-laws, and order of business. But the profession was then an incongruous body, with representatives from nearly every nation on the face of the earth, possessing their national traits, with prejudices born of education and surroundings.

As the satisfactory working of a piece of complicated machinery requires a proper adjustment of the several parts, so the successful working together of a large body of men requires special training. The labors appertaining to this organization developed the mental angularities of the individual members; and after passing through a few sessions of polemics and dissensions it died of inanition in 1861.

During its existence the following gentlemen were honored with the Presidency : B. F. Keene, El Dorado ; Henry Gibbons, Sr., San Francisco; Arthur B. Stout, San Francisco; R. B.

Ellis, San Francisco ; Isaac Rowell, San Francisco, and Samuel F. Hamm, El Dorado. Arthur B. Stout, is the only one of these now living.

MEDICAL JOURNALS.

While this organization did not accomplish all its projectors hoped, it was productive of much good. In the year of its origin the "California State Medical Journal" was established in Sacramento by the late John F. Morse. It was a quarterly, and the fourth number contained its valedictory.

In 1858 the "Pacific Medical and Surgical Journal" was established in this city by the late Henry Gibbons, Sr., who continued to edit its columns until shortly before his death in 1884, when he transferred it to its present manager. It still survives its founder, a creditable monument to his ability, industry, and love of his profession.

In 1860, "The San Francisco Medical Press" was established by the late Elias S. Cooper, and was merged in the latter journal in 1865. The "Western Lancet" was established in 1872, and, like the "Press," lost its identity in its older competitor. During the year 1886 there were three journals established : one at Los Angeles, "The Southern California Practitioner," a sparkling monthly, reflecting credit upon its editors ; one in this city, "The Pacific Record," a monthly with a large list of subscribers ; and one in Sacramento, "The Medical Times," a popular monthly, with a rapidly increasing subscription list, and a corps of earnest editors.

MEDICAL COLLEGES.

The Medical College of the Pacific, the first on this Coast, was established in this city in 1858 by the lamented Elias S. Cooper. It did creditable work in the field of science, and sent out many graduates who have attained honorable positions in the profession; but it suspended temporarily in 1864, soon after the death of its founder. During the latter year another school was organized in this city which, in honor of its founder, was called the Toland Medical College. It was conducted as a private institution until 1875, when the property was deeded to the State as the Medical Department of the University, and now stands a monument to his generosity.

In 1870 the Pacific Medical College again opened its doors for the admission of students ; and in 1882, through

the munificence of one upon whom you have been pleased to bestow the highest honor within the gift of this Society, it was placed upon an everlasting foundation, whence the light from its towering walls on the hills of the West, like the rays from the wonderful antique lamp of the student Hieronymus, "through the mist and murk and dropping rain, streamed out into the darkness, and was seen by many wakeful eyes." The College of Medicine of the University of Southern California, was established at Los Angeles in 1885. It organized with a full corps of earnest instructors, and graduated its first class last week.

RE-ORGANIZING THE STATE SOCIETY.

In February, 1870, the state legislature passed a bill creating a State Board of Health, conferring upon it such powers as were then deemed necessary to conserve the public health.

That Board, through its efficient secretary, Thomas M. Logan, issued a call for another convention to meet in the hall of the Young Men's Christian Association in this city, on the 19th day of October following, for the purpose of re-organizing the State Medical Society. This call resulted in the assembling of 46 physicians. They re-organized, elected Dr. Logan President, and adopted the constitution, by-laws and order of business of the old Society. During the meeting of two days, which was characterized by industry and harmony, 36 members were added by application and election.

It received a further impetus in 1871, when the American Medical Association held its annual meeting in this city. Anticipating that event this Society held a special meeting in Pacific Hall on the 1st day of May, at which time 72 applicants were elected to membership, making 154 in all, or nearly one-half the practicing physicians in the State. An interest in professional matters was re-kindled which has never ceased to burn, though its fires have sometimes paled. From the remotest parts of the State members have come to our annual meetings, braving the *mal de mer*, or enduring the discomforts incident to a stage ride over snow-clad mountains, across swollen streams, and through miry vales. That the time, labor and money thus expended have resulted in valuable acquisitions to this Society, and benefit to the profession at large is apparent from the increased membership, the higher standard of medical education established in this State, and the improved scholarship in the profession.

The distinguished members who have served this Society in the capacity of President since its re-organization, are here-with enumerated chronologically: Thomas M. Logan, Sacramento; Henry Gibbons, Sr., San Francisco; Geo. A. Shurtleff, Stockton; Thomas H. Pinkerton, Oakland; John M. Brown, (U. S. N.), Vallejo; Alexander B. Nixon, Sacramento; Wm. Fitch Cheney, Chico; Washington Ayer, San Francisco; Henry S. Orme, Los Angeles; A. W. Saxe, Santa Clara; F. Walton Todd, Stockton; Gerrard G. Tyrrell, Sacramento; Levi C. Lane, San Francisco; Ira E. Oatman, Sacramento; R. Beverly Cole, San Francisco; William P. Gibbons, Alameda, and Walter S. Thorne, San Jose.

Thomas M. Logan and Henry Gibbons Sr., the first two, to whose untiring efforts more than to those of any others was due the success of this re-organization, have gone, ripe in years and full of honors, "to that undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveler returns."

"The forms they hewed from living stone,
 Survive the waste of years alone,
And, scattered with their ashes, show
 What greatness perished long ago."

And Wm. Fitch Cheney, the seventh in order, has been "gathered to his fathers." In the prime and pride of manhood, in the enjoyment of a lucrative practice, and in the zenith of an enviable professional reputation, he died a martyr to professional enthusiasm.

The progress of our State during the past three years has been phenomenal. Prosperity and thrift prevail throughout its great extent. In 1885 our population was estimated to be about 1,000,000. It is now estimated, from reliable sources, to be 1,350,000, or an annual increase of 100,000. The increase in the number of medical practitioners has been proportionately great.

The records show that there are now more than 1,700 regular physicians in this State, but only about one-fifth of them are members of this Society. During a recent excursion through the State I visited the city of San Diego, which had a population of 3,000 souls three years ago. Last year it was estimated at 11,000, and to-day they claim 30,000. The number of practitioners of medicine recently reported from that county is 146, and they have a County Society of 37 members, but this Society has only five members in that county.

San Bernardino County has 60 physicians, and a County Society of 20 members; but we have only four members in that county.

The city of Los Angeles had a population of 11,311 in 1880. Last year it was estimated at 40,000, and to-day they boast of 80,000. There are 200 regular physicians in the county, and they have a local Society of 40 members; yet the State Society has only eleven members in that county.

Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties are prosperous in the extreme, with rapidly increasing populations following up the advent of new railroads. They have more than 100 resident physicians, yet not a local Society; and this Society has only five representatives in the three counties.

In the city of San Francisco more than 40 per cent. of the resident physicians are members of this Society, while in the counties above enumerated only about five per cent. are members.

At first thought this great disproportion in membership between the central and southern parts of the State seems to indicate a condition of apathy in the latter which is incompatible with the character of a learned profession. But the problem becomes one of easy solution when we remember two important factors, viz. that the population in the southern counties is of rapid growth; and that this Society has never held a meeting south of San José.

It is more than seven hundred miles from this city to the southern border of the State, and while we have a few members in these far away counties who rarely fail to meet with us, there are many excellent and reputable physicians there, unaffiliated in Societies, who feel that the time and expense necessary to attend our meetings are too great. But within ninety days from this date the cities of San Diego, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo will be distant from Los Angeles not to exceed four hours by rail. Enthusiasm, like small-pox, is contagious and requires the presence of the germ to infect. Is not, therefore, the subject of holding the next, or an early annual meeting in the southern part of the State worthy your serious consideration?

In this connection, too, I may remind you that it is well along in the second decade since the American Medical Association held its memorable meeting in this city, and suggest that it will be wise to "put our house in order," that we may extend to that body an invitation to hold its annual re-union here on the

twentieth anniversary of that occasion. Such an event will occasion another revival in professional matters on this coast, the result of which is not within the range of the keenest vision to discern. But we should have a largely increased membership in our Society, to greet them on such an occasion.

EXPERT TESTIMONY.

This Society has frequently passed resolutions calling upon the Legislature to enact some law whereby a competent expert may require a fee commensurate with the value of the testimony to be given. The knowledge possessed by the expert which peculiarly fits him for that function has usually been acquired through years of arduous toil over the "midnight oil," and the expenditure of thousands of dollars. This knowledge is justly regarded his "capital in business." Neither individuals nor governments have any more right to despoil him of that capital without just compensation than to require the banker to give up his gold, or the merchant his silk.

While there may be no special enactment on this subject there seems to be some general law applicable, and the Courts of this State have set the precedent by ordering such fees to be paid.

The following letter upon this subject is self-explanatory:

"April 3rd, 1888.

"*My dear Dr. Plummer:*

"In relation to the subject of your inquiry, the following may be of some interest: In 1872, during the second trial of the notorious Laura Fair for the murder of Mr. Crittenden, ten medical experts—among them Drs. Bennett, Sawyer, Bertody, Hammond, Stillman, Shurtleff, and myself—were detained in Court about five days, and received as compensation therefore by order of the Court, two hundred and fifty dollars each. The presiding Judge on the occasion was Reardon, of Grass Valley, and the Prosecuting Attorney was the present Judge Murphy of our Superior Court.

"On the 14th of last December I declined, unless compelled, to give any expert testimony in the case of the 'People against Maroney,' then on trial for the shooting at Judge Murphy. Judge Toohy, presiding, ruled that, according to a recent decision of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, an expert was compelled to testify, provided, he was previously guaranteed expert

fees by the Court. I testified accordingly, and, on February 6th of this year, was paid fifty dollars, the amount ordered by the Court. Yours truly,

C. F. BUCKLEY."

With this position taken by the Courts of our country it seems scarcely necessary to importune the Legislature to take action upon this particular branch of the subject.

But there is another phase of this question which may well claim the serious consideration of that body. Our laws permit both parties litigant to examine experts, ostensibly for the enlightenment of Courts and juries. Over-zealous attorneys frequently subpoena experts because of the particular opinion they entertain, rather than the knowledge they possess. Such testimony is usually in behalf of the party who pays for it; hence the Court and jury are frequently unenlightened, the ends of justice defeated, and a reproach cast upon our profession. The laws of our sister republic, France, provide that experts shall be selected by the Court from among those of well-known ability on the subject at issue, and of unquestioned integrity. The Court orders the compensation, and the expert becomes a part of the machinery of the Court. It is my belief that, with an unimpeachable judiciary, the ends of justice will be better subserved by a similar law in our own country.

FOETICIDE.

The crime of foeticide has often been condemned by this Society, and the Committee on Legislation instructed to draft such a bill as will offer better prospect of punishing the criminal. Your present Committee, aided by the valuable co-operation of our honorary member, Dr. E. R. Taylor, attorney at law, has devoted much consideration to this subject, and arrived at the conclusion that any law more stringent than that now governing the matter will place physicians in the power of blackmailing schemers.

STATE MEDICINE.

The International Sanitary Congress recently assembled at Rome failed to evolve anything of practical utility in the department of prophylactic medicine; but we need not look far for an explanation. As ancient Rome on her seven hills went down amidst too many conflicting political elements when she essayed to become "Mistress of the Ancient World," so

this modern city, in her laudable efforts to establish "sanitary lights" for the guidance of the civilized world, failed, because of too many conflicting commercial interests.

QUARANTINE.

The subject of Quarantine is one to which the public and the profession on this Coast have recently had occasion to give much consideration. One year ago small-pox was declared epidemic in Los Angeles, and we are only now recovering from the effects of one in this city. One of our prosperous mountain towns was in quarantine several weeks, and sporadic cases developed throughout the State. San Francisco is the chief sea-port city of the Pacific Coast, and is in almost daily communication with China, Japan, Australia, the Pacific Islands, South America, Central America, and Mexico, the hot-beds of cholera, typhus, small-pox, and other contagious diseases. This is the western gateway to the homes of sixty millions of people. There are not less than six daily overland trains leaving this coast, and all liable to carry the germs of disease into the very heart of this great nation. Realizing this, it is but in accordance with the American sentiment of preventive medicine that we desire protection. We want a quarantine station, and since it is for the national good, the nation should provide it. Our Congressmen in Washington have been earnestly moving in the matter, and this Society should take the necessary action in the premises to give them "aid and comfort" in their noble work.

BOARDS OF HEALTH.

It is the sentiment of the State Board of Health, in which I heartily concur, that the number of local Boards should be increased. There should be one in every town of 500 inhabitants; or there should be a County Board with general powers of supervision. The Legislature has already provided the method of forming such Boards through the Supervisors (see Political Code, Sec. 3060 and 3061); but to enable these, and the State Board as well, to better protect the public from pestilential invasions or during epidemics, they should have increased powers. One essential measure in this direction will be a law rendering vaccination compulsory in every child before it is admitted into any public school.

BURIAL PERMITS.

The protection of property rights, the security of life, and the punishment of crime, call for some measure to prevent the interment or cremation of any human body in this State without a proper permit. These should be issued by Health Officers or Boards of Health, where such exist; or, in the absence of either, by a Justice of the Peace. They should be issued only on a certificate of death signed by a legally qualified practitioner of medicine in this State, if there be such within reasonable distance of the deceased; otherwise by the Coroner, or by two reputable citizens cognizant of the death and its cause; such certificate and permit to be filed for record in the proper office.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS.

The law relating to the recording of births, marriages and deaths is so imperfectly executed that it is of no practical value in the compilation of statistics. Sections 3075 and 3077 of the Political Code, and 377 and 378 of the Penal Code provide for the enforcement of the act, and health officers should enforce it.

MEDICAL PRACTICE ACT.

The "Regulation of the Practice of Medicine" by Legislative enactment is of ancient date. Aristotle wrote: "Even in Egypt the physician was allowed to alter the mode of cure which the law prescribed to him after the fourth day; but if he did so sooner he acted at his own peril."

While it is true that some run after "strange gods," it is equally true that many are slaves of habit, and believers in the wisdom of the past. Innovations are not received by them with that warmth of affection which usually greet the first-born in the new household. But when a custom has lapsed for one generation or more it practically becomes an innovation to re-establish it. When the effort was made in this state, in 1876, to secure the passage of a bill to Regulate the Practice of Medicine, it met violent opposition both within and without the profession. The result was, we accepted such a law as could be obtained—not such as we *desired*. But it served as an entering wedge, and in 1878 salutary amendments were procured. We have annually appointed a Board of Examiners in accordance with its provisions, and yearly reports of that Board have been presented to this Society.

A part of the commendable work performed by it is set forth

in the Medical Register, wherein all persons engaged in the practice of medicine in this state have been classified according to their practice and qualifications. It is no longer possible, therefore, for any one to impose himself, under false colors, upon the public or the profession.

For some years after the adoption of the present law the halls of legislation were patrolled by parties whose financial interests were concentrated in its repeal or modification. Your Board of Examiners and Committee on Medical Legislation recognized its defects, but feared that any bill which might be started on its passage through the legislature would be so shorn and changed by amendments that it would not be recognized when it should emerge in the form of a law. They therefore reasoned that the interest of the public and of legitimate medicine would be better conserved by using all proper influence to prevent any further legislation on that subject until the desirability of such a law should be more firmly engrafted on the public mind.

Such a time seems now to have arrived. The people are becoming aware of the fact that while certificates of competency and integrity are required of engineers, bank cashiers, and "kitchen divinities," it is equally important to look after the qualifications of those into whose hands they consign themselves when overtaken by disease or accident. After the experience of ten years in the administration of the present law we are better enabled to point out its defects and suggest the remedies.

NEW LAW.

Last year this Society adopted a resolution affirming its belief that public and professional interests would be better subserved by a single Board of Examiners rather than by three, as now constituted; and that an examination of the applicant as to his fitness to practice the healing art is preferable to examination of his diploma as the basis of his right to a certificate, as now provided. In accordance with that sentiment your Committee on Medical Legislation, with the coöperation of our honorary member, has prepared a bill which will be presented for your consideration during this meeting.

We learn from the writings of Strabo, Aristotle, Plato and others, that ancient Greek physicians, "practiced as stipendiaries at the Royal Courts," and as "public functionaries with stated salaries, appointed by the people." It was not an innovation,

therefore, when the legislature, in creating the State Board of Health, provided that its expenses, not to exceed \$4,000 per annum, should be paid out of the public treasury. The sequel has proved that it was a wise appropriation of public funds; but when the bill was approved creating the State Board of Examiners no such provision was made for its expenses. The only revenue, under the law, is derived from the fees for certificates, and this is inadequate to a proper discharge of the duties of the Board.

While the function of the State Board of Health appertains to preventive medicine, that of the State Board of Examiners has reference to practical medicine—quite as important to the public. In the efforts of the latter Board to enforce the Medical Practice Act the want of funds has seriously interfered; hence, among the features in the proposed bill is one providing a sum of money not to exceed \$5,000 per annum to defray its expenses. Many of the features in the old law have been retained in the new bill, among which is the section having reference to the refusal or revocation of certificates for unprofessional conduct.

Like the priest-physicians of old, the doctor frequently fills the office of confessor as well as doctor. He is familiar with all the ills to which flesh is heir. "The mystery of birth, the solemnity of death, the anxiety of disease, and the agony of despair," are phases of life daily presented to his view. He is admitted into the *sanctum sanctorum* where no other feet than his are permitted to tread. He is a welcome spectator and auditor where no other is permitted to look or listen. Human nature, stripped of all conventionalities, lies exposed before him. The aspirations of intellect, the devotions of love, the secrets of conscience are revealed to him in the hour of triumph, of weakness, or dismay. If purity of character and unsullied reputation be required in any walk in life, surely it should be in the medical profession. Pope's invocation to the physician at his bedside expresses his high appreciation of the healing art, and of him who properly dispenses its blessings:

"Friend of my life, which did not you prolong,
The world had wanted many an idle song."

But the spirit of "trade," in the guise of the "Medical Jesuit," has invaded the sacred precincts of medicine and robbed it of much of its inherent dignity. It creates motives, justifies methods, and leads to ends wholly at variance with truth and dignity. No one ever descends from the exalted position of a

true disciple of Æsculapius to the methods of the charlatan until he demonstrates to himself, as well as to the public, his inability in the practice of medicine. Christopher Smart fully appreciated this character when he painted it in the following lines :

“ On mere privation she bestowed a frame,
And dignified a *nothing* with a name ;
A wretch devoid of use, of sense, of grace,
The insolent tenant of encumbered space.”

The ethics of our profession are older than the canon-law, older than the church itself ; and they ought to be supported, that the public may be protected from imposters, and the profession from debasing influences. This is not now an experiment, for it has been so long recognized by the Bar and the Bench as applied to the legal profession, and so often sustained by the courts in behalf of the medical profession, that no principle of law seems better established.

MEDICAL EDUCATION.

Medicine was taught in ancient times in the temples of Æsculapius, in the schools of philosophy, and in the gymnasia. Plato had the following inscription placed over the door of his academy :

“ Let none ignorant of geometry enter here.”

Hippocrates wrote : “ Things which are sacred are only to be imparted to sacred persons. It is unlawful to impart them to the profane until after their initiation into the mysteries of the Science.” In writing to his own son, he said : “ Give due attention, my son, to geometry and arithmetic, for such studies will not only render your life illustrious and useful to your fellow beings, but your mind more acute and perspicacious in arriving at fruitful results in everything pertaining to your art.”

If a liberal knowledge of the arts and sciences was a prerequisite to the study of medicine in ancient times, it is equally important to-day. In the near future we should have a law requiring the would-be student who has not a degree in arts to pass an examination before a State Board prior to entering college. All the collateral branches should be laid under liberal contribution. He should be required to know enough of the language in which lectures are delivered to comprehend all that is said to him; and he should also be able to make himself understood by patients and attendants.

The subject of medical education is so closely allied to that of medical legislation that they are practically inseparable. If the standard of acquirements to practice be raised by the State Board, it necessarily follows that the standard of education will be raised by colleges. Students will then seek those institutions which afford the best facilities for learning rather than those which provide an easy pathway to an "M. D." degree.

The three colleges in this State are keeping pace with the times on the subject of education, each requiring stated qualifications, or preliminary examinations for entrance, and three regular courses of lectures delivered during three separate years before the student is admitted to the final examination. The matriculates in these three colleges during the year 1887 numbered 191, of whom 44 were sent out from their sheltering roofs with the veritable parchment bearing witness that the holders had been legally invested with the title Doctor of Medicine.

But we regret to chronicle the fact that students have entered college in this city on the 1st of June, and after attending lectures four months, have gone to some of the adjacent or Eastern schools, returning here the following March—less than ten months from the date of matriculation—with a diploma from a "college in good standing." Is this justice to the students, to the profession, or to the public? Is it in support of that higher standard of education recommended and adopted by the better class of institutions of learning throughout the civilized world? Is it not rather an explanation of the *modus operandi* by which the country is flooded with incompetent and impecunious doctors?

Our Board of Examiners, recognizing this evil, has adopted and published a resolution, sending a copy thereof to every medical college in the United States, that on and after March 1891, it will not grant a license upon a diploma from any school which does not require of its candidates for graduation three regular courses of lectures, delivered during three separate years. In this effort it deserves the warmest support of this Society.

In this connection, we are glad to note that the Medical Department of the University of Wooster, at Cleveland, Ohio, and the Medical College of Ohio, at Cincinnati, have given notice that they will hereafter require attendance upon a three

years' graded course. The St. Louis Medical College has lengthened its term of lectures to six months, and the Chicago Medical College to eight months.

DISCUSSIONS.

Few men in our profession have the forensic power or moral courage to indulge in an impromptu debate; I have therefore stepped aside from the well-beaten path of my predecessors, in appointing members to open the discussion immediately following the reading of the Committee reports in the practical Sections. I trust the infraction will receive your cordial indorsement.

I desire to call your attention to the condition of the Constitution and By-laws of this Society. While they may have been adequate to our wants thirty-two years ago they can scarcely be expected to cover the requirements of to-day. I therefore recommend that a Committee be appointed early in this meeting to prepare such amendments as may seem desirable.

